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**Imprimatur.**

*Hen. Maurice*

**Feb. 8.**  
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THE  
Country-Parson's  
ADMONITION  
TO HIS  
Parishioners.

Perfwading them to con-  
tinue in the  
PROTESTANT RELIGION.



With  
Directions how to behave  
themselves when any one  
designs to seduce them  
from the Church of *England*.

By the Author of the *Plain  
Man's Reply to the Catholic  
Missionaries*

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THE

Country-Parson's

ADMONITION

TO HIS

Parishioners.

**Y**OU cannot but observe the restless importunity of the *Romish Clergy*, to gain Profelytes to their Church. And 'tis probable, that you your selves ere long, may happen to hear from them. For they have different Forms of Address,

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dress, very plausible, and insinuating, fitted to the Capacities of all sorts of Persons. And therefore that you may not be surprized with these Charmers, nor imposed on by their Methods of Deceit; I do think it my Duty thus to caution you against them, by desiring you to observe these *two* Directions.

1. *A Holy Life.*

2. *A modest Dependance upon your Spiritual Guide.*

As to the *first* of these, let me admonish you in the words of St. James, *Shew me thy Faith by thy Works.*

For it signifies nothing what Mens *Profession* is, if their  
*Practice*

*Practice* is not answerable. And he who is in earnest to save his Soul, will doubtless be as much afraid of *Debauched Courses, as of erroneous Opinions*: Since those do as much, nay more than these, occasion his Damnation.

I do therefore beg of you, That as you do profess your selves Members of the *Church of England*, so you would take great Care, that your Lives and *Conversations* may be answerable to its *Doctrine*.

The sum of which *Doctrine*, as it relates to Practice; you do find in the *Church-Catechism*, in answer to those two Questions; *What is thy*

*Duty towards God? and What is thy Duty towards thy Neighbour? Which I would advise you very often to read, and seriously to consider. And when by the Assistance of God's Blessed Spirit, you have transcribed those Answers into your Lives; Let me then assure you, That the Ten Commandments thus practised, are the best Exposition of your Creed. If any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God, John 7. 17. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken, even that which he hath, Mark 4. 25. i. e. He who maketh*



maketh a right use of that Grace and Knowledg which God hath given him: He who values and improves it, and is truly thankful for it, *To him shall be given more. And he that hath not; i. e.* He who hath not made a right use and improvement of his Grace or Knowledge; *from him shall be taken, even that which he hath.*

But because you must not expect, that God should now teach and instruct you in an extraordinary and miraculous manner, as he did the Apostles, but *mediately*, and in the use of means: You are therefore to consider what those

Means are, which God hath appointed for your Direction and Instruction. The chief of which (to omit others) is,

*A modest Dependance upon the Ministerial Function.*

I shall not now insist upon the publick Offices of the Church, nor your Obligation to attend them; as *Prayers, Sacraments, Preaching, &c.* but shall only direct you how to behave your selves, when any one designs to seduce you from the Communion of the *Church of England.*

And the expedients I would propose, are these

I. Let it be your earnest and daily *Prayer* unto God, to  
give

give you his Grace, to hold fast the Profession of your Faith, without Wavering; that you may continue in the same unto your Lives End.

2. When you read the Holy Scriptures, and do find some Place which is too difficult for you, do not then pretend to Interpret it yourselves. But beg the Direction of your Spiritual Guide; and desire him to shew you how it is to be understood.

3. As far as possible avoid all Disputes about Religion. Be not carried about with every Wind of Doctrin. Ephes. 4. 14. i. e. Do not hearken to the Whispers of every bold Pretender. Which

Which to Persons of your Capacity is very seasonable Advice. For, *To convince Gainsayers*, and to answer *Objections*, is a matter of Skill and Exercise : And therefore *You* ( being a working People , who sweat for your daily Bread ) may with great modesty acknowledge to your *Catholick Missionary*, that you have neither Leisure nor Ability for such Disputes. And consequently you may desire him, since he is disposed to discourse of Religion, that he would rather help your Devotion, than disturb your Belief.

You may assure him, That

you

you shall not think your Faith the less firm and Orthodox, because you cannot return an *Extemporary* answer to the premeditated Objections of a learned Adversary.

'Tis possible that such a subtle Disputant, as he is, might pretend to prove to you ; *That Grass is not Green.* And he might urge such Arguments as would really baffle you ; and to which you could not return any tolerable Answer. But yet for all his Sophistry, though he might silence, he would not satisfy. For you would still believe your Senses, and could not think it of any other Colour.

IF

If this will not make him to desist; But that he will still be urging the great Privileges of the Romish Church: *The Security of her Faith; The Excellency of her Devotion; The great Learning and Piety of her Clergy, &c.* To this you may reply,

4. That you understand very little of the Privileges of the Church of *Rome*. That to know the State of any Foreign Church, requires more Skill and Reading than can be expected from Persons of your mean Condition. That you are Members of the Church of *England*, which is a true Catholic and Apostolic

*lic Church.* That into this Church you were admitted by Baptism; and with this Church you have held Communion in all her Offices. And consequently to separate from this Church, without some urging cause, is downright *Schism*.

For *Schism*, in the proper notion of it, is, *A causeless separation from that part of the visible Church, of which you are Members.*

And therefore he who hath a mind to make you his *Profelytes*, and will talk pertinently, and to the Point; before he can pretend to invite you to the Church of  
*Rome,*

*Rome*, he must first convince you, That it is your Duty to *separate* from the Church of *England*. In order to which, he must plainly prove, That the Church of *England* is no sound Member of the Church Catholic ; and consequently, That Salvation cannot ordinarily be had in the Church of *England* : At least not with such Safety, Certainty, and Advantage, as it may in the Church of *Rome*.

To prove this he must convince you, That the Doctrine of the Church of *England* is either *defective* or *false*. If he pretends that it is *defective* ; he must then shew, that



that there are some Truths necessarily to be believed, as Articles of Faith, which the Church of *England* doth not receive as such. And also that there are some necessary Duties, or Parts of Worship, which the Church of *England* either wholly omits, or else doth not require under any such Necessity. And let him here instance to you ; what those Articles and Parts of Worship are, wherein our Church is thus *defective*.

But if he affirms, *Secondly*, That the Doctrine of the Church of *England* is *False*, he must then prove, That the Church of *England* doth require

quire some *unlawful* Condition of her Communion; and that either in *Faith* or *Worship*. Plainly thus: He must make it appear, That her Faith is *erroneous*, and contrary to the written Word of God; *The Faith once deliver'd to the Saints*: Or else that her Worship is *Unlawful*, Superstitious, or Idolatrous. And let him here likewise give you an Instance, and distinctly shew you, what particular Article of our Faith is thus *erroneous*: And what particular part of our Worship he thinks *unlawful*. And when he hath made his Exceptions, you may then tell him.

5. That

5. That your Memory is but short ; and if he please therefore to give you in *writing* what he hath now said, together with *one* or *two* of his best Arguments upon those Points ; you may then consider them at your Leisure.

If he refuseth to give you such a Paper, suspect him for a Cheat, and that he comes with a design to impose upon you. For Truth doth not fear the Light, but submits its Tenets to the strictest Examination.

But if he grants your Desire ; then bring that Paper to Me, and give me the  
 oppor-

opportunity to tell you my Thoughts of it. And I do here beg and intreat you, nay (as one who must answer for your *Souls*, if they perish through my Neglect) I require and charge all you in this Parish committed to my Care; that you would be so Faithful both to your selves and me, as not to be too confident of your own Skill: nor to think any Argument unanswerable, because you your selves are not able to answer it.

In the Affairs of this World, you do judg it prudent to consult other Men in their several Professions,  
*Phy-*

*Physicians, Lawyers, &c.*

Should some crafty Companion pretend to your *Estates*, you would not at the entering of his Action, grant him Possession; but would consult the Learned in the *Law*, how to defend your Title.

Pray therefore do not part with your Religion for a Trick. But be as careful of your Souls as you are of your Estates.

*Let us hold fast the Profession of our Faith, without wavering; for he is Faithful that Promised. Heb. 10. 23.*

F I N I S.

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